

Sermon Outline

Research, write, and preach a narrative sermon based on Daniel, Mishael, Hananiah, and Azariah deciding how to turn Nebuchadnezzar's demands for a golden image celebration into an evangelistic moment for God.

Bible Passage:

The Prime Minister, the Governors, and the Kings. Daniel 2:48 – Daniel 3:30

Sermon Thesis:

There is only one king. One. Only One.

If you know Daniel, you'll recognize the real King.

Key Thoughts:

- *Leaders' egos are far too easily impressed.*
- *Even God's clearest illustrations can be "Photoshopped" to match my dreams.*
- *Once you've set your mind toward God, never look back.*
- *Saying something is "True" doesn't make it so.*
- *God never loses His sense of humor or His commitment to love.*

Research:

- Who were the "Governors" of Babylon - those who were responsible for public works, kingdom finances, social events, celebrations, and music while Nebuchadnezzar was demanding a golden image celebration?
- How hot can mechanical bellows make an oil-fed smelter fire?
- Where did the Governors stand during the celebration?
- What are "satraps" and "pipes?" ...*and all those other words...*

Imagine:

- The sensory explosion of the event:
 - Sounds – *especially the zithers*
 - Sights – *Satraps in their finest silks*
 - Flavors – *ah, the food! Compare this event to the Shah of Persia's great banquet in 1971*
 - Smells – *some good, some less good*
 - Textures and temperatures – *fire heat on sweaty skin*
 - Add in your emotions as you participated in the event
- Choosing to stay standing, on the King's viewing platform, while everyone else bowed.
- Being thrown into the fire by your personal Royal Guards.
- How you were greeted when you flew through the flames and landed in God's court.
- King Nebuchadnezzar recognizing "The Son of God" Daniel had described to him.

- The horror of learning you were going to have to walk back out of the furnace rather than stay talking face-to-face with The Creator.

Purple Passages to try:

- “My personal bodyguard bound my feet, his tears flowing a river onto the ropes.”
- “A thousand howling jackals would have improved the music.”
- “Freedom comes with a short rope.”
- “The safest place in the universe is as close as you can get to God.”

STOP Signs that provide good spots for inserting local stories:

- Daniel tells the Governors that the King wants a golden idol on a pedestal for everyone to worship. *“There’s a great story that comes from World War II when England’s Winston Churchill told America’s General Eisenhower that it was time to storm the beaches of France...”*
- The Governors stand beside King Nebuchadnezzar and the herald begins his call. *“Many emotions flew through my mind on my wedding day...”*
- The Governors refusing a second chance. *“I tend to re-think my most difficult decisions. Like when...”*
- Verse 19 – when the King goes full furious. *“It’s really tough when a good friend turns on you...”*